

REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES IN TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS

1. The report seeks to update Members on various issues relating to the Transport and Highways portfolio since the last report to Council.

Winter Salting

2. I am pleased to announce a series of improvements to this year's Winter Service Arrangements. The County Council is again better prepared already having 22,000 tonnes of salt being brought into stock which is 12,000 tonnes more than government recommendations and 7,400 tonnes more than last year including 5,500 tonnes under cover in a new salt barn constructed as part of our investment in the new highways depot at Billsthorpe.
3. The County Council is also actively promoting and supporting individuals and local councils to assist with the winter service particularly snow clearing. So the County Council is
 - Offering bagged salt to Parish Councils for use as they see fit in icy or hazardous conditions, individuals may wish to buy some themselves from local builder's merchants whilst stocks are plenty.
 - Providing and filling hundreds of grit bins for individuals to use to clear snow and ice from public roads and footways, and in addition the opportunity for community groups and Parish Councils to purchase additional blue grit bins.
 - Inviting volunteer parish snow wardens to call in reports of local conditions across the County and in some cases help clear snow from footways in village centres.
 - Inviting farmers to assist with clearing roads of snow.
4. Together we will do our best to keep Nottinghamshire moving.

Flood Board

5. I am pleased to report that the first meeting of the Joint Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Strategic Flood Risk Management Board was held on the 10 October 2011. The meeting was chaired by Cllr Laughton and attended by representatives of the all the authorities involved in managing surface water flooding including Severn Trent Water. Nottinghamshire County Council is now a Lead Local Flood Authority and one of the key aims of the Board is to ensure that flood risk to communities is adequately and appropriately managed. The Board will in the future agree funding priorities for investment in local flood risk management, and encourage joint funding of projects. A good example of this joint approach is a major culvert replacement currently under construction in North Wheatley, which when complete will reduce flooding risk to the village and local school. This is a jointly funded project between the County Council, Bassetlaw District Council and the Environment Agency. The Board will also assist with providing information to individuals and local communities on how they can make their own provisions to reduce the impact of flooding through for example protecting their own properties with flood boards for doors and similar.

MOPS Transfer

6. The County Council remains on track to terminate the current manage and operate partnerships with Ashfield, Broxtowe and Mansfield District Councils to bring all highway services across the County under the direct management of the County Council from 1st April 2012. This will ensure our highway services are in the future delivered on a consistent basis across the County based on the need to improve and maintain each individual road rather than by allocation of funding on an area basis. This will also facilitate a more flexible and responsive approach to concerns of local residents and communities where this is within our broad objectives and reasonable resources. It will also release a cost efficiency of almost £1M a year from 2012/13. I can reassure local councillors in Ashfield, Broxtowe and Mansfield that continuity of highway service delivery is a critical consideration in how District Council staff are transferred into the County and as TUPE regulations apply there will be many familiar faces in the highways team.

A60 Forest Lane Junction Safety Scheme

7. I am pleased to announce that money has been secured to improve the A60 / Forest Lane junction which is just north of Burntstump Hill. £320,000 has come from the Growth Point initiative and been matched with £170,000 from the County Council. This will resolve a long standing safety problem at this busy junction and make it safer for traffic from Papplewick to access the southbound side of the A60.
8. The junction will be signalised and street lighting installed, along with a 40mph limit on the approaches on each side. Work is scheduled to start in mid-October and should be completed in mid-January 2012.

Street Lighting Energy Saving

9. I am pleased to report further progress on this programme. In Rushcliffe draft proposals have been published for Keyworth and Soar Valley electoral divisions, and consultations are complete for Radcliffe on Trent division.
10. In Bassetlaw draft proposals have been published for Retford East and West divisions, and consultations are complete for Tuxford and Blyth and Harworth divisions.

Newark Bus Station

11. I am delighted to report that construction work is nearing completion on the new Newark Bus station. The contractors are programmed to hand over the building to Nottinghamshire County Council on the 31st October. There will then be a further 2 weeks needed to complete the internal fit out and it is programmed to become operational on the 7th November. The opening ceremony is planned for the 11th November.

Mobility Strategy

12. The Mobility Strategy was approved in April 2011 and progress is being made on delivering the Action Plan including the following:
13. **Transport Accessible to All (TATA)** - The Council have launched a new TATA interactive website which also gives information about transport offered by a wide range of community and voluntary groups, as well as information on accessible taxis, links to other sources of information and volunteering opportunities.
14. **Mobility Needs Register** – The TATA website also includes a Mobility Needs Register whereby individuals can supply information where appropriate transport is not available, or about additional mobility needs.
15. Section 106 Funding has been secured from Broxtowe Borough Council for a new fully accessible MPV vehicle for use in Broxtowe, which will improve the service offered by the local Voluntary Car Scheme.

Real Time Information

16. Further progress is being made to install 100 Real Time displays in the Core area following successful bids for £450k of Growth Point monies in 2010. The Growth Point monies were matched with £100k of Local Transport Plan funding.

ERDF funded 'Jobs in Ashfield' project.

17. I am pleased to report that the ERDF supported number 2 bus service started on the 1st August which improves links from the Selston area to employment and training opportunities at Sherwood Business Park and Hucknall.

18. Improvements to bus stop infrastructure in Sherwood Business Park have been programmed for completion by April 2012.

Competition Commission:- Change for Buses

19. The competition Commission (CC) on 6 October published detailed and wide ranging proposals to open up local bus markets to greater competition. The CC initial findings published in May concluded that in many areas across the county there was little or no competition leading to less frequent services and higher fares.
20. Following consultation the CC is proposing a number of remedies which includes multi operator ticketing, restrictions on changes to service frequencies, access to bus stations, updating DFT best practice for supported services, improving partnerships and reviewing bus services operator's grants. The CC is not recommending franchising (as operates in London) because it addresses the symptoms of the problems they found, not the cause.
21. I shall be considering the CC proposals very carefully and how they may be used in the county to improve the offer to our bus passengers and communities and will bring a report to council next year. The full CC report can be reviewed on the CC website. www.competition-commission.org.uk.

Bilthorpe Depot Update

22. Members will recall that construction of the new depot started last winter as part of the County Council's highway depot rationalisation project. Work is progressing well, with all buildings now being fitted out with electrics, data and plumbing infrastructure, and walls being closed and painting started. Externally the drainage and ducting are complete, and the kerbing and street lighting progressing. The salt barn was completed in August and is being filled with salt ready for the winter. Moving into the rest of the new depot will take place starting in the New Year and will take about two months which will then release some of our older depot facilities including Kelham Road, Newark for disposal.

Junior Road Safety Officer Scheme

23. Following a successful pilot in over 20 primary schools, the Junior Road Safety Officer (JRSO) scheme is due to be launched within the next few weeks.
24. In addition to the 20 pilot schools, which saw 1930 pupils receiving some road safety education, a further 40 schools have already been recruited with more currently being targeted.
25. The scheme enables the delivery of road safety education to all children in primary education in a more efficient, less staff intensive manner. The children participate in activities and assignments, many of which can be included within the curriculum, organised by the JRSO, who is a pupil recruited from within year 5/6 at the school. Targeted

messages are provided, supported by resource materials and links to further information, provided through the JRSO pages of the County web site. In addition, specific school community issues can be raised through the JRSO, who will be supported by a Road Safety Officer, to determine appropriate methods to tackle them.

Rights of Way Workshop

26. A workshop to discuss future management of the rights of way network was held on October 25th at Rufford Country Park. The event was well attended by members of user groups such as the British Horse Society and Nottinghamshire Footpath Preservation Society along with members of the Local Access Forum and the Rights of Way Committee. The theme was how to manage an increasing rights of way network in the current demanding economic environment.

Widmerpool to Wysall Footpath Opening

27. A path has recently been added to the Definitive Map in the parishes of Widmerpool and Willoughby on the Wolds. A new 7 metre footbridge has been built over a tributary to the Kingston Brook, and the path opens up new opportunities for circular walks from Widmerpool, Willoughby and Wysall Villages. It has been well received by both local walkers and the landowner.

COUNCILLOR RICHARD JACKSON
CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS